

CLAIMS

I/We claim:

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1. An apparatus for displaying screen saver views generated by a computer application operating in a screen saver mode, the apparatus comprising:
 - a storage medium; and
 - a processor coupled to the storage medium that performs the following steps:
 - (a) monitoring the apparatus for detecting inputs from a command entry device;
 - (b) determining whether a timeout period of inactivity from the inputs has been exceeded; and
 - (c) in response to step (b), executing an application in a screen saver mode, the application being a program that is fully functional in a full application mode and that is less than fully functional in a screen saver mode, the application creating images for presentation on a display screen in the screen saver mode.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus comprises a wireless communication device.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus further comprises a carousel stored in the storage medium, and an application handle stored in the carousel, the handle being associated with the application and executing the application in the screen saver mode
4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the carousel comprises a database stored in the storage medium containing the application handle and rules for selecting the application handle.
5. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the rules are definable by a user of the apparatus.
6. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the rules comprise default rules.

7. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the database further contains application execution parameters associated with the handle, wherein the application is executed in the screen saver mode according to the parameters associated with the handle selected for executing the application.

8. The display device of claim 7, wherein the application additionally has another handle comprising different execution parameters.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is in communication with a network and displays current information generated by the application operating in the screen saver mode based on data received from the network.

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the images are continually updated in response to data received from the network.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the processor further performs the step of (d) executing at least one additional application in a corresponding screen saver mode, the at least one additional application being a program that is fully functional in a corresponding full application mode and that is less than fully functional in a corresponding screen saver mode, the at least one additional application creating images for presentation on the display screen in the corresponding screen saver mode.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the processor cycles between performing steps (c) and (d) according to an order.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the order comprises rules for scheduling the execution of applications in their respective screen saver modes.

14. A wireless communication device, comprising:

a receiver;
a memory storing data;
a display screen;
at least one application stored in the memory having at least one handle executing the at least one application in a screen saver mode when the at least one handle is selected, the at least one application creating images for presentation on the display screen in the screen saver mode; and
a screen saver program stored in the memory that, during operation of the screen saver program, selects the at least one application handle.

15. The wireless communication device of claim 14, further comprising a carousel containing the at least one application handle.

16. The wireless communication device of claim 15, wherein the carousel comprises a database stored in the memory containing the at least one application handle and rules for selecting the at least one application handle.

17. The wireless communication device of claim 16, wherein the rules are definable by a user of the communication device.

18. The wireless communication device of claim 16, wherein the rules comprise default rules.

19. The wireless communication device of claim 16, wherein the database further contains application execution parameters associated with the at least one handle, wherein the at least one application is executed in a screen saver mode according to the parameters associated with the at least one handle selected for executing the at least one application.

20. The display device of claim 19, wherein the at least one application additionally has another handle associated with the at least one application, the another handle comprising different execution parameters.

21. The wireless communication device of claim 14, wherein the at least one application comprises a network application creating images responsive to data received during operation in the screen saver mode.

22. The wireless communication device of claim 21, wherein one of the parameters associated with the network application is a uniform resource locator (URL).

23. The wireless communication device of claim 14, wherein the device is a Java™ enabled platform and the at least one application is written for operation in a Java™ type architectural model.

24. A method of creating screen saver displays on a display device, the device having a display screen, a storage medium, a screen saver computer program stored in the storage medium, and a screen saver carousel stored in the storage medium, the method comprising the steps of:

- adding an application handle to execute an application in a screen saver mode to the screen saver carousel;
- starting the screen saver program in response to exceeding a timeout period of inactivity; and
- selecting the application handle to execute the application in the screen saver mode.

25. The method of claim 24, further comprising the following steps:

- installing the application on the display device; and
- selecting an option for the application to operate in the screen saver mode.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein the application is pre-installed on the device, further comprising the following steps:

- executing the application in a full application mode on the display device; and

selecting an option for installing a screen saver mode for the application to operate in the screen saver mode.

27. The method of claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

monitoring the display device for a timeout signal that the application has exceeded a time period allotted for operation in the screen saver mode; and

in response to detecting the timeout signal, if another application has been configured to operate in a screen saver mode, executing another application in a screen saver mode associated with the another application.

28. The method of claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

monitoring the display device for an input signal from a command entry; and

if a signal is received from the command entry device after the application has been executed, determining whether the executed application operating in the screen saver mode is an interactive application; and

if the executed application is an interactive program, terminating the screen saver program, and

executing the interactive program in a full application mode.

29. A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising:

monitoring activity on a device having a display screen;

determining whether a timeout period of inactivity on the device has been exceeded;

evaluating whether a screen saver carousel contains application handles, each of the application handles executing a respective application in a screen saver mode when selected; and

if the carousel contains at least one application handle, and if the timeout period has been exceeded, selecting the at least one application handle to execute the respective application.

30. The computer readable medium of claim 29, wherein the activity being monitored is the detection of input signals from a command entry device in communication with the device, the steps further comprising:

if a signal is not received from the command entry device, if a timeout period for operation of the respective application is exceeded, and if the carousel contains more than one handle,

selecting a different handle to execute another respective application associated with the different handle.

31. The computer readable medium of claim 30, wherein the respective application associated with the at least one handle and the respective application associated with the different handle are the same application configured for operation in different screen saver modes depending on the handle selected.

32. The computer readable medium of claim 30, wherein the respective application associated with the at least one handle and the respective application associated with the different handle are different applications.

33. The computer readable medium of claim 29, wherein the activity being monitored is the reception of input signals from a command entry device in communication with the device, the steps further comprising:

if a signal is received from the command entry device after the respective application is executed, determining whether the respective application currently operating in the screen saver mode is an interactive application; and

if the respective application is an interactive program,

terminating the screen saver program, and

executing the respective interactive program in a full application mode.

34. A portable device comprising:

a display screen;

a memory;

a command entry device;

a computer application stored in the memory, the application having at least one handle executing the application in a screen saver mode when the at least one handle is selected, the application being a program that is fully functional in a full application mode and is less than fully functional in a screen saver mode, the application creating images for presentation on the display screen in the screen saver mode;

a different computer application stored in the memory having at least one different handle executing the different application in a different screen saver mode when the at least one different handle is selected;

rules within the database for determining the scheduling for selecting the at least one handle;

parameters within the database associated with the at least one handle for controlling operational aspects of the application;

a screen saver program stored in the memory selecting the at least one application handle during operation of the screen saver program according to the rules; and

a processor coupled to the memory that performs the steps of:

- monitoring the device for detecting inputs from the command entry device;
- determining whether a timeout period of inactivity from the inputs has been exceeded;
- in accordance with instructions from the screen saver program, selecting the at least one application handle stored in the carousel;
- if a signal is not detected from the command entry device since the period of inactivity was exceeded, and if a timeout period for operation of the application is exceeded, selecting the different handle to execute the different application associated with the different handle in its respective different screen saver mode;
- if a signal is detected from the command entry device since the period of inactivity was exceeded, determining whether the executed application operating in the screen saver mode is an interactive application; and
- if the executed application is interactive,
- terminating the screen saver program, and
- executing the executed interactive program in a full application mode.